

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 7 were amended in this response. No new matter has been introduced. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Saito* (U.S. Patent No. 5,504,933) in view of *Yoshikawa* et al. (US Patent 6,249,532) or *Garneau* et al. (US Patent 5,497,420). For the following reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims of the present application are patentable over the art of record and respectfully request that the rejections be withdrawn.

Specifically, the cited art, alone or in combination, does not disclose “checking whether access to the desired program is allowed if the usage identification data and stored usage identification data match, wherein the access is contingent upon the age of the user being within at least one range of values” and “debiting an amount of money associated with the at least one desired program when the entered usage identification data and the stored usage identification date are identical and when access to the desired program is allowed” as recited in claim 1 and similarly recited in claim 7. *Saito* discloses a conventional “pay-per-view” system where requests for viewing are transmitted via a telephone line, and wherein the charging center sends a viewer permit code for allowing the user to view selected programs (col. 4, lines 10-45). In the various embodiments of *Saito*, there reference provides means for providing open program numbers (col. 7, lines 24-25), temporary program numbers (col. 8, lines 22-24), and a plurality of scramble patterns (col. 8, lines 45-50). However, in each of the embodiments, the fees are charged and collected through a straightforward fee request via a telephone line using the decode data (col. 9, lines 12-14; 52-55; col. 10, lines 3-5, 25-27, 47-50). However, there are no provisions in *Saito* that allow for additional scrutiny when users, particularly those below a certain age, are attempting to access programming.

Furthermore, *Yoshikawa* and *Garneau* do not cure the deficiencies of *Saito*, as discussed above. Both references merely describe a system that provides security for program requests via terminal ID encryption and scrambling. However, both references are silent regarding the aforementioned features. The Applicant further wishes to note that the present claims recite

credit account processing at the service provider end (see claims 1 and 7, see also FIG. 1). This feature is also not disclosed in the cited art.

In light of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1 and 7 of the present application, as well as claims 2-6 and 8-10 which respectfully depend therefrom, are both novel and non-obvious over the art of record. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If any additional fees are due in connection with this application as a whole, the Examiner is authorized to deduct such fees from deposit account no. 02-1818. If such a deduction is made, please indicate the attorney docket no. (0112740-247) on the account statement.

Respectfully submitted,

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